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SHADOW HOUSING MINISTER
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WIRRINA’S HUMAN COST

The Government’s plans to gentrify inner-suburban Parap will come at a human cost, says Opposition Housing spokeswoman Kezia Purick.

“Today's announcement that the Government is demolishing 67 public housing units at the Wirrina complex might be politically useful for the Labor Party, but it’s bad news for tenants,” Ms Purick said.

“While the Government has promised to find all displaced Wirrina residents a new home, the Opposition wants to know where the former tenants are living now and how many of them were happy to be leaving their homes.

“I understand some residents had been there for many years and were deeply dissatisfied at being forced to leave a suburb where they had friends and social networks nearby.”

Ms Purick said while there’s little doubt the Wirrina complex has passed its use-by date, the Government’s plans go beyond simply building new public housing to replace the demolished stock.

“In a recent electorate newsletter, Michael Gunner said 70% of the new units at the Wirrina site will go on the private market and just 30% will be set aside for affordable housing and senior's public housing.

“That stops will short of a commitment to replace all the public housing demolished as part of the redevelopment.”

Ms Purick said that in the same newsletter, Michael Gunner makes the extraordinary claim that:

*We need a new social mix in this area*
“With that attitude, it’s looking grim under the Henderson Government for public housing residents who, on that basis, could face eviction because their street, town or suburb needs a new social mix.

“On the face of it, Parap’s being gentrified at the expense of public housing tenants.

“It’s further indication of Labor’s disregard for the concept of public housing which has seen the Territory’s public housing stock slashed from 7451 dwellings in June 2000 to just 5352 in June 2007. “

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